

# E-MAIL MAGAZINE

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## 1. OSAKA BUSINESS AND INVESTMENT CENTER (O-BIC) ACHIEVEMENTS IN FY 2014 (THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF INVESTMENTS ACHIEVED)

The Osaka Business & Investment Center (O-BIC) was established in 2001 jointly by the Osaka Prefectural Government, Osaka Municipal Government and the OCCI as a one-stop support center to promote foreign direct investment in Osaka (Secretariat: International Division, OCCI).

In 2014, O-BIC attempted to attract foreign investment through cooperation between public and private entities by tying up with Osaka International Business Promotion Center and JETRO Osaka. Efforts from the government to strengthen promotion of investment in Japan, coupled with tailwinds in the form of a depreciating yen helped O-BIC post a highest record of 38 investments in one year ever since its inception.

As part of FY2014 activities, O-BIC serviced 113 inquiries by giving out market information and providing advisory information for company setup. Further, taking advantage of the country's first ever [Zero Local Tax] tax incentive for Kansai Innovation International Strategic Comprehensive Special Zone, O-BIC placed emphasis on new energy and life sciences industries and also pro-actively promoted Osaka and Kansai regions among overseas business groups and overseas companies in Japan and abroad.

The Osaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry



A closer look at the successful 38 investment cases reveals that 31 of them are from Asian countries such as China and South Korea, thus ensuring that Asia continues to contribute 80% of the total share, which is the same as last year. A country/region-wise breakup shows that the top 3 contributors are China (including Hong Kong) with 17 cases, South Korea with 10 cases, and UK with 4. This is Europe's first entry in the top 3.

O-BIC visited Britain in May last year and met individual companies, and also accompanied the OCCI delegation on its 'Economic Mission to Europe' in October and actively promoted Osaka among the local companies and business groups. As a result, these companies have now opened offices in Osaka.

Sector-wise, the number of service industry companies entering Japan for new market opportunities was remarkably high, while Asian companies from countries such as China stood out for the purpose of exporting technologically and qualitatively superior Japanese products to their home countries.

Ever since O-BIC was established in 2001, a total of 380 companies have made investments in 14 years, and on a cumulative basis, the top 3 countries in terms of investing companies have been China (including Hong Kong) with 131 cases, South Korea with 66 cases and U.S. with 40 cases.

## **2. FLIGHTS BETWEEN KIX AND LA, AND KIX AND CANADA (VANCOUVER) RESUMED ONE AFTER ANOTHER**

This year, two international flights from Kansai International Airport (KIX), which had been suspended for a while, were resumed one after another. Flights between KIX and Los Angeles operated by Japan Airlines were resumed on March 20 for the first time in eight years, and ones between KIX and Vancouver on May 2 for the first time in seven years.



Mr. Shigetaka Sato, Chairman of the Osaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI), has focused on promotion activities to expand the number of flights between KIX and North America, visiting the U.S. three

times. Resumption of these flights was achieved due to his efforts as well as in response to the expectations of companies in the Kansai region.

A state-of-the-art Boeing 787 aircraft is now in service between KIX and Los Angeles. This aircraft, whose cabin pressure can be set higher than in conventional aircraft, can offer passengers a comfortable environment even on long flights. In addition, Japan Airlines has adopted a new seating layout of its own for the aircraft to ensure a more pleasant flight.

These flights connect Los Angeles with 60 other cities in the U.S., Canada, Brazil and other countries, in cooperation with American Airlines. Since the flights arrive at Los Angeles in the morning, they enable passengers to move on to New York and Washington on the East Coast and Atlanta and Houston in the South on the same day.

Japan Airlines is running a campaign for this flight route until September 30. During the campaign period, double FLY ON Points are offered to passengers. For more information, please see JAL's website (in Japanese): [http://www.jal.co.jp/121campaign/kixlax\\_wflyon/](http://www.jal.co.jp/121campaign/kixlax_wflyon/).

Meanwhile, Air Canada rouge, now providing flight service for the first time in Japan, operates a Boeing 767-300ER aircraft on the route between KIX and Vancouver. Established in 2012, the company, a leisure airline owned by Air Canada, has operated flights between Canada and approximately 60 popular tourist cities in Europe, the Caribbean, Mexico, and the U.S.

Passengers from KIX can conveniently change planes in Vancouver to go on to other cities in Canada and the U.S. as well as to Mexico City. Moreover, they are not required to pick up their bags at Vancouver Airport or go through immigration procedures to enter Canada if they change planes in Vancouver to go on to cities in the U.S. and Mexico City on the same day. They can also go through immigration into the U.S. at Vancouver Airport. Accordingly, when they arrive at their destination in the U.S., they are treated the same as passengers on U.S. domestic flights and all they need to do is to pick up their baggage.

Service to KIX is operated with up to five flights per week until October 24, with both premium and economy classes available. Air Canada rouge is also conducting an airline ticket present campaign on its website to

commemorate its new flight services. Further details are available on their special website (in Japanese): <http://www.aircanada.jp/rouge/KIX/>.

### **3. OSAKA NO JIN 400 YEARS TENKA-ICHI FESTIVAL NOW UNDERWAY!**

Currently, the Osaka no Jin 400 Years Tenka-ichi Festival, an event with the Siege of Osaka Castle as theme, is being held at Osaka Castle Park and other places in Osaka Prefecture. The Siege of Osaka Castle was a series of battles fought by the Tokugawa clan (east side), which established the Edo Shogunate, with the aim of destroying the Toyotomi clan (west side), which still had enormous influence, with those remaining living in Osaka Castle. The festival is organized by the Osaka no Jin 400 Years Project Executive Committee, which comprises OCCI, the Osaka City and Prefectural governments, various media, and railway business operators. Considering this year, which marks the 400th anniversary of the Summer Campaign of the Siege of Osaka Castle, as a symbolic year to enhance the urban attractiveness of Osaka, the committee is holding the festival until September 30.

In Osaka Castle Park, where the main event will be held, until September 30 visitors can enjoy a tour inside the Castle's inner moat, riding on the Osaka-jo Gozabune, an old Japanese-style excursion boat with a gilded roof. They can also try a rickshaw ride around major spots in Osaka Castle Park, which is scheduled to be offered in July and August. Various other events are also planned in areas outside Osaka Castle Park, including an event where a traditional sake brewery revives an old sake called "Soboshu," said to have been regularly drunk by Toyotomi Hideyoshi, in contemporary style. For more details, please visit <http://www.osakanojin400.com/> (in Japanese).

### **4. OCCI INTERNATIONAL DIVISION REPORT ON VIP VISITORS**

- April 27 (Mon.) His Excellency Mr. Doan Xuan HUNG, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in Japan
- May 18 (Mon.) His Excellency Mr. Akylbek Absatuly Kamaldinov, Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in Japan
- May 19 (Tue.) Mr. Ha Tae-yun, Consul-General, Consulate-General of the Republic of Korea in Osaka

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